

CANCER DIOGENES.



CHARACTER GENERICUS.

Pedes octo (rarius sex aut decem;) insuper manus
duæ chelatæ.

Palpi sex inæquales.

Oculi duo distantes, plurimis pedunculati; elongati, mobiles.

Mandibula cornea, crassa.

Labium triplex.

Cauda articulata, inermis.

Lin. Syst. Nat. Gmel. p. 2963.

CHARACTER SPECIFICUS, &c.

CANCER MACROURUS PARASITICUS,
chelis lævibus pubescentibus: sinistra majore.

Lin. Syst. Nat. p. 1049.

Rumph. mus. t. 5. f. K. L. ?

Catesb. Car. 2. t. 33. f. 1. 2.

Insectorum, quæ miro et singulari modo formata complectitur genus *Cancer*, numerosissimas species in phalangas pro vario corporis habitu distribuere prorsus necesse est, ut facilius dignosci possint. Et cancris nonnulli corpore brevi sunt et quasi suborbiculato,

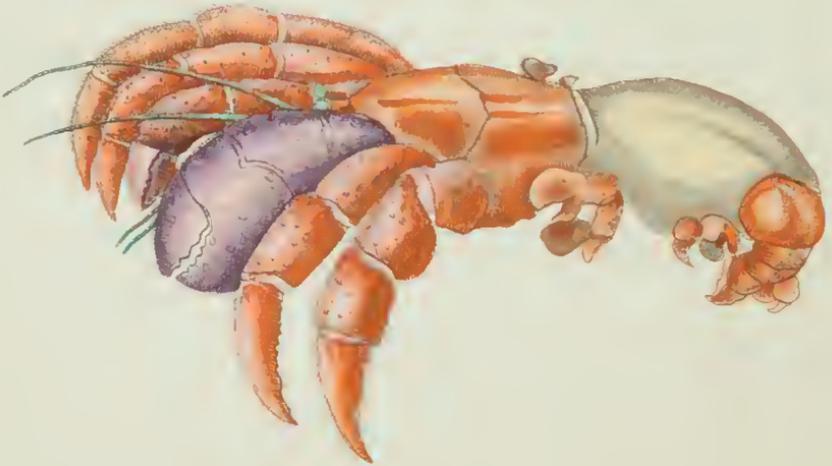
biculato, cujus diametros transversa non raro longitudinem superat. Alii forma sunt gracili et elongata; alii admodum spinosi seu muricati; alii omnino læves. Sunt qui chelis maximis validisque armantur; sunt etiam quorum pedes imbelles et inermes. Aliis denique vasta est et insignis magnitudo; aliorum mira tenuitas efficit ut singulae partes non nisi microscopii ope satis examinari possint. Quæ in hoc genere continentur animalia crustas seu exuvias certis intervallis solent exuere; sub quod tempus artus gradatim contrahuntur et exiliores fiunt, ut e chelis reliquaque crusta facilius liberentur: quo factò, in latibulo quiescit cancer paucos dies donec novum tegmen satis induruerit, quod primo membranaceum potius est quam crustosum. Membrum amissum, quod plerisque animalibus gravissimum foret et irreparabile, parum aut nihil queruntur cancri; paucis enim septimanis excrefcit alterum novum et integrum. Immo quasi scientes inesse iis naturam facultatem repullulandi, si membrum aliquod læsum fuerit aut contusum, non expectant donec sanetur, sed subito et violento nisu veluti impedimentum abjiciunt, et in locum tutum et quietum se recipiunt, parte mox redintegrata gavisuri. Universo fere cancerorum generi mira inest foecunditas; cujus insigne exemplum est in illo qui *Astacus* dicitur, unde duodecim millia ovorum singulo partu excluduntur. Gulæ dediti et animalibus et vegetabilibus vescuntur. Cancer quem describimus inter eas species militat quæ crusta seu tegmine postico destituuntur, quæque igitur testas univalves, si quas in litore invenerint vacuas et idonee formatas,

tas,

tas, intrantes incolunt, corpore in testam immerso, chelis exertis. Cancrorum qui *molles* seu *parasitici* vocari solent præcipuæ species sunt *Bernardus* et *Diogenes*. Diogenem depinximus, qui plerumque testam muricis, buccini, turbinis, vel neritæ inhabitat, unde et nomen adeptus est, quod testa eodem modo utatur quo celebris iste pseudo-philosophus dolio suo. Figura prima monstrat animal testa inclusum, secunda testa exutum.

Nec prætereundum est insigniter in cancris aberrare naturam a generali suo consilio, quo cautum est ut omnes corporis partes utrinque sibi invicem respondeant. Ex illis enim multi chelas gerunt ab hoc latere immodicas, ab illo tenues et exiles; cogiturque cancer vocans et alii nonnulli brachium grande et incommodum inter ambulandum dorso imponere. Notandum porro est chelas magnas, quæ ut plurimum sunt a dextro latere interdum esse a sinistro; quod idem testis nonnullis univalvibus accidere notissimum est, quarum ora nunc dextrorsum nunc sinistrorsum sita sunt.





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THE
DIOGENES CRAB.



GENERIC CHARACTER.

Feet commonly eight, (in some species six or ten)
besides two chelated ones.

Palpi or Feelers six, unequal.

Eyes two, distant, in most species footstalked;
elongated, moveable.

Mandible thick.

Lip triple.

Tail articulated, unarmed.

SPECIFIC CHARACTER, &c.

ELONGATED PARASITIC CRAB, with
smooth pubescent chelæ, of which the left is
largest.

THE INDIAN HERMIT-CRAB.

THE VIOLET-CLAWED HERMIT-CRAB.

The genus Cancer is distinguished not more by
the singularly curious shape and appearance of the
insects it contains, than by the vast variety of spe-
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cies into which it is divided; the number of which is so great that it is found entirely necessary to subdivide them into sections according to their different shape or general habit, in order that they may the more readily be investigated. Some are of a short, thick, and nearly orbicular form, and sometimes the transverse diameter of their body considerably exceeds the longitudinal: others are of a thin and long form: some are strongly muricated; others perfectly smooth: some are furnished with very strong and large chelæ or claws; others have only weak, unarmed feet: lastly, some are remarkable for their great size, while others are so diminutive as to require the assistance of glasses in order to determine the structure of their several parts.

The animals of this genus cast their shells from time to time. When this period approaches, the limbs gradually shrink or waste in size, so as to enable them to be drawn with the greater ease from the claws and other parts of the shell. The animal then lies in a quiet state for some days, till the new shell is formed, or rather till it is hardened; for at first it is rather membranaceous than crustaceous. The loss of a limb, an accident so dreadful and irremediable to the major part of the animal world, is to these creatures of but little importance; since the space of a few weeks supplies the defect, and restores them to their former state. What is still more wonderful, these animals, when injured, maimed, or bruised on any particular limb, do not wait for the process of a gradual recovery of that individual part, but, as if conscious of the power of reproduction,

production, voluntarily cast off with sudden violence the offending member, and betaking themselves to a state of retirement, await the formation of their new limb. Most of the genus are very prolific animals. The female of the common Lobster produces upwards of twelve thousand eggs each time of laying. They are of a very voracious nature, and feed on animal as well as vegetable substances. The species of cancer here represented is one of those which have the body naturally destitute of a shelly covering; in consequence of which they never fail to take possession of such vacant univalve shells as happen to suit their convenience; the body being immersed in the shell, while the claws remain exerted. Amongst these parasitical or soft-bodied species the two most remarkable are the Cancer Bernardus and the Cancer Diogenes. It is the latter of these which is figured on the present plate; the first figure shewing the animal in the shell, the second representing it divested of its covering. It is generally found inhabiting the shell of a Murex, Buccinum, Turbo, or Nerite, and has obtained the title of Diogenes from its residing in this convenient receptacle as that celebrated pseudo-philosopher is reported to have done in his tub.

I should not dismiss this article without observing that the genus cancer affords a curious example of deviation from that general symmetry of parts so conspicuous in most other animals; in which the shape of the body and limbs on one side exactly corresponds to that of the other. Many of the Cancra, however, are furnished with a pair of chelæ
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on one side of immoderate size, while those of the opposite side are thin and small; and in some particular species, as the *C. vocans*, &c., the size of the large arm is so great as to oblige the animal to support it on its back, in which position it is generally placed while the creature is walking. It may likewise be added that this is a particularity which is sometimes reversed; a circumstance which takes place, as is well known, in the univalve shells.